

We're not going to give up – Goldsworthy HOPES ARE SUNK BY SAFETY PROBLEMS

THE state of Loakes Park has forced Wycombe Wanderers to drop their application to join the Football League.

Club Secretary John Goldsworthy, just back from the team's tour of Portugal, said this week that the ground was not up to League standards.

He said that after discussions with League officials the club had been advised to withdraw their application "for

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the time being."

The stumbling block is that safety regulations currently enforced at First and Second Division grounds — including the segregation of fans and prevention of pitch invasion — are now to be extended to Third and Fourth Divisions clubs.

But Loakes Park does not come up to scratch. "Even assuming the finance was available it was impossible to complete all the work in time for an inspector and a report to the Football

League's Annual Meeting," said Mr Goldsworthy.

Changes which need to be made include:

- Fencing the ground into four sections.
- Installation of toilets at the Hospital end and covered enclosure.
- More turnstiles and exits at the Hospital end.
- The terracing at the Hospital End needs concreting.
- The perimeter fence around the playing area must be raised to prevent pitch invasions.

"Most people are aware that this exercise has cost clubs a huge amount of money," said Mr Goldsworthy, adding that the Wanderers were still determined to make the fourth Division.

"We are determined to overcome the problems," he said.

WYCOMBE Wanderers, whose bid to join the Football League failed because of inadequate safety precautions at their Loakes Park ground, are to re-examine their future plans following the derisory number of votes cast for Altrincham at the League's annual meeting on Friday.

Altrincham, the only outsider trying to gain election to the League, received only 15 votes, while the lowest of those seeking re-election was 41.

The obvious question now is: If Altrincham with their outstanding record in both F.A. Cup and Alliance Premier League over the last two seasons fail so dismally, what hope is there for Wycombe?

Stacked against

In order to bring their ground up to standard, Wycombe will have to spend many thousands of pounds. What is the point of doing all that and then still failing to gain election to the Football League?

That was always the risk

Football

but now the odds stacked against them seem insurmountable. It is problems such as these that Wycombe committee will discuss in the near future.

First club reaction to the Football League's strong rejection of outsiders came from secretary John Goldsworthy. "I am very depressed about it all. I feel very sorry for Altrincham. We will obviously now review our position," he said.

Wycombe's only chance of progressing in that direction, lie in the hope that division Four will eventually be split into two sections — north and south. But despite the economic climate there

seems little chance taking place in the foreseeable future.

There was one bit of good news for Wycombe this week. They will meet Slough Town at Wexham Park on Saturday, August 8 in the Dylon Charity Shield.

This is the Isthmian version of the more famous Charity Shield, and should be competed for by the Premier Division champions and Hitachi Cup holders. But as all conquering Slough won both titles last season, there has to be a change of format.

Away draw

Enfield, league runners-up, are ineligible now they have joined the Alliance League, so third placed Wycombe were next in line. So the Wanderers, without a trophy last season, could col-

lect one nice and early next term.

Wanderers have been drawn away to Division Two side Rainham Town in the first round of the Hitachi League Cup — which means a long midweek trip early in the season.

They learned this news at the Isthmian annual meeting also on Friday, when their vice-chairman Brian Lee was elected to the eight man management committee.

Wycombe's own annual meeting will take place on Thursday July 16, when the club's possible formation into a company will be a major subject under discussion.